

FLIXTON HALL, SUFFOLK.



FLIXTON HALL, IN SUFFOLK.

THE SEAT OF SIR ALEXANDER ADAIR, BART.

This noble structure is pleasantly situated on the river Waveney, between the market towns of Harleston and Bongay, from which latter place the river is navigable to Yarmouth, where it discharges itself into the North Sea, having divided the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk for a great extent of country. It is 105 miles from London, in a delightful neighbourhood.

The building stands upon or near the site of an ancient nunnery founded by Margery, the widow of Bartholomew de Creke, and daughter of Jeffery Hautville, about the time of Henry III. The foundress gave the manor of Flixton to this house, which was dissolved by the second bull of Pope Clement VII. In 1528, when its annual revenue was estimated at 23*l.* 4*s.* 1*d.* and intended for Cardinal Wolsey; but that prelate declining the offer, it was granted to John Tasburgh, whose descendants long resided at Flixton Hall. When this family became extinct, it descended to that of Wyburn, and was afterwards purchased, about the middle of the last century, by Mr. Adair.

The present building was erected about the year 1615. Its old style of architecture is peculiar to the counties of Suffolk and Norfolk; probably it is the best specimen to be found in them. A most originally surrounded the house, but this has been filled up. The principal front is to the north; the hall and staircase are grand, the apartments large and spacious. To the south was an open portico and colonnade, now closed up, and converted into separate rooms.

The grounds in front are ornamented with extensive plantations, which, united with the fine woods of the park, present to the eye an appearance of grandeur and magnificence, and with the river, have a most beautiful effect.

C. J. R.

ST. WINEFREDE'S WELL AT HOLYWELL, FLINTSHIRE.

THE current number of the "Archæological Journal" contains a plan and view of this monument, furnished by Mr. Poynter, with a notice of its present state of dilapidation, to which we drew attention many months ago. The structure is in the perpendicular style, and may be dated, on heraldic evidence, ante 1495.

The building inclosing the well is erected against the side of the hill from which the water issues, and forms a crypt under a small chapel contiguous to the parish church, and on a level with it, the entrance to the well being by a descent of about twenty steps from the street. The well itself is a star-shaped basin, ten feet in diameter, canopied by a most graceful stellar vault, and originally inclosed by stone traceried screens, filling up the spaces between the supports. Round the basin is an ambulatory, similarly vaulted.

The neglected state of this beautiful edifice having forced itself upon the notice of the inhabitants of Holywell, a subscription was entered into, and the proceeds, about 400*l.*, have been expended in disengaging the chapel from some unsightly erections built against it, in restoring the windows, and in some general repairs necessary to maintain it for the purpose of a school-room, to which it is now put; but nothing has been expended on the crypt, which is, nevertheless, independently of the mutilation of the screens and decorations, in a state to excite the apprehension of all lovers of antiquity. Nor are the gentlemen to whom the expenditure of the fund has been entrusted open to blame on this account. The difficulties of effecting any substantial repair, when it is most likely to be wanted, are great and pecu-

liar; so much so, that it is not easy even to speak with certainty on the actual condition of the substructure.

The water, as already stated, rises with great force from a bed of shingle, on which the inclosure of the basin and the supports of the vaulting have been founded without any excavation; and in order to prevent the effects of the shingle washing away, the overflow of the basin is raised about four feet (the depth is unequal) from the bottom, and the sluices of the mill raise the surface of the water about two feet higher. This depth of water, in violent agitation, even when the sluices are opened, and the water above the overflow let off, effectually prevents the possibility of seeing the bottom of the basin, but by sending workmen into the water, it was ascertained that the shingle had disappeared from under the foundations of the walls of the basin, in some places nearly as far as the men could thrust in their arms, and in one instance at least, a squared stone has given way. This disappearance of the foundation, notwithstanding the judicious precaution originally taken to secure it, might appear a mystery, but that the well, in the days of ignorance, was frequented by bathers, who, it is believed, pulled out the pebbles, and carried them away as memorials of the miraculous properties of the water. In the original state of the building, the main basin was protected by the screens, but these have been broken down long enough to allow for the gradual abstraction of the bottom in this manner and to this extent.

Whatever may be the cause, such is the effect, and under such circumstances this beautiful building cannot but be considered in a state of peril, which calls at least for further examination, although as yet the arches do not exhibit any marks of settlement. It is possible that the contingency of the shingle becoming loosened, or washing from under the wall, may have been provided for. There is evidently a

* In this number the view of the cloisters at Windsor Castle, omitted from the last, is given. There is also an illustrated account of the Franciscan Friary at Reading, by Mr. John Billings, already printed in *THE BUILDER* (Vol. III., p. 506), and a notice, by Lord Alwyne Compton, of a decorated pavement in Hacombe Church, Devonshire.